

Chapter 6 - U.S. AWARDS TO FOREIGN MILITARY PERSONNEL

Section 1 - GENERAL

610. POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

1. It is DoD policy to recognize individual acts of heroism, extraordinary achievement or meritorious achievement on the part of service members of friendly foreign nations when such acts have been of significant benefit to the United States or materially contributed to the successful prosecution of a military campaign by Armed Forces of the United States. Each act or achievement shall be recognized through the award of an individual U.S. decoration. DoD decorations, however, shall not be awarded to foreign military or civilian personnel.

2. Decorations which may be awarded to foreign personnel by the U.S. Navy are: Navy Cross, Distinguished Service Medal, Silver Star, Legion of Merit (in four degrees), Distinguished Flying Cross, Navy and Marine Corps Medal, Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal and Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal. The Legion of Merit (in four degrees) and the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal are considered the most appropriate decorations to be awarded foreign citizens during peacetime. Foreign military personnel in ranks comparable to the grade of 0-6 and below at the time the act was performed and at the time the decoration is presented may be awarded the Silver Star, Distinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star Medal, or Air Medal for valorous acts in actual combat in direct support of operations.

3. Limitations on Individual Awards

a. The Medal of Honor, Purple Heart and Combat Action Ribbon may not be awarded to personnel of foreign nations.

b. The Distinguished Service Medal shall be awarded to personnel of foreign nations only under the most exceptional circumstances, and only after approval by the President.

Section 2 - ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

620. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The processing of foreign awards requires coordination with the Department of State, clearance through various agencies of the DoD and, in some instances, prior concurrence of the country concerned, which cannot be requested until the award is approved. It cannot be emphasized too strongly that:

- a. Premature disclosure must be avoided; and
- b. At least 90 days must be allowed for processing.
- c. Recommendations should reach DoD (when appropriate) within 6 months after completion of the period of service for which the award is being recommended.

2. All recommendations of the Legion of Merit will be marked For Official Use Only and given appropriate handling. Recommendations for awards to individuals must be accompanied by a brief biography which shall include date and place of birth, current duty station, if applicable, address, and military or civilian affiliation of the nominee. The concurrence of the U.S. Ambassador and the Defense Attaché to the country of the recipient/unit will be obtained prior to forwarding to SECNAV via CNO/CMC as appropriate.

3. Necessary coordination with the Department of State and clearance with the respective governments will be accomplished at administrative levels within the DoD.

4. In addition to the requirements of article 620.2, the content of recommendations and the chain of command through which they are submitted will be the same as specified for awards to U.S. personnel and units (see arts. 220, 221, and 321).

5. End of tour awards to members assigned permanently to a Navy or Marine Corps command require only a standard 1650/3 submission to SECNAV via the chain of command. The foreign officer is responsible for notifying the respective country of receipt of the award.

621. CITATIONS AND CERTIFICATES

1. Legion of Merit. When in the degree of Chief Commander, the certificate is signed by the President and the Secretary of Defense jointly. When awarded in other degrees, the certificate is signed by the SECDEF and SECNAV jointly. A seal is affixed to the citations for all degrees signed by the SECDEF.

2. Other Decorations. In the case of other decorations, a citation and certificate is signed by SECNAV.

3. Unit Awards. The original citation, with copies and ribbon bars for personnel of the unit, are provided by CNO/CMC.

622. PRESENTATION OF AWARDS. If the recipient is in the Washington, DC area, presentation will be made in the name of the President by SECNAV or his personal representative. Otherwise, it will be made in the name of the President by the Ambassador to the country concerned or such other official as he or she may designate. The recipient is presented with citation, certificate and medals, standard and miniature, for each award. In those instances when the recipient is receiving a second or subsequent award of the same decoration, the appropriate distinguishing device will be attached to the suspension ribbon of the medal. End of tour awards to members assigned permanently to a Navy or Marine Corps command may be made at the command level following the approval of the award by SECNAV.

Section 3 - REQUIREMENTS

630. SPECIFIC AWARDS1. The Legion of Merit

a. The Legion of Merit, in the degrees identified below, is awarded to individuals who distinguish themselves by "exceptional meritorious conduct in performance of outstanding service" to the United States. The second or succeeding award of this decoration must be in the same or a higher degree than the previous award.

(1) Degree of Chief Commander. Awarded by the President of the United States, upon the recommendation of the

SECDEF, after concurrence by the Secretary of State, to foreign chiefs of state or heads of government.

(2) Degree of Commander. Awarded by the SECDEF, after the concurrence of the Secretary of State, to individuals holding a rank equivalent to a U.S. Military Service Chief of Staff or higher position but not to chiefs of state.

(3) Degree of Officer. Awarded by the SECDEF, after the concurrence of the Secretary of State, to individuals of the following rank or position:

(a) Officers of general or flag rank serving in positions below the equivalent of a U.S. Military Service Chief of Staff.

(b) Officers in ranks parallel with colonel or equivalent, for service in positions comparable to those normally held by general or flag officers in the Armed Forces of the United States.

(c) Foreign military attaches.

(4) Degree of Legionnaire. Awarded by the SECDEF, after the concurrence of the Secretary of State, to all others eligible.

2. Meritorious Service Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal and Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal

a. The Meritorious Service Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal or Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal may be awarded to a member of the armed forces of a friendly foreign nation who distinguished himself/herself by extraordinary achievement or meritorious service that has been of mutual benefit to a friendly nation and the United States.

b. The awarding of any of these decorations to a member of the armed forces of a friendly foreign nation shall be based upon an act or a service that would satisfy the criteria governing the award of that decoration to a member of that Military Department.

c. These decorations may be awarded by SECNAV.

d. These decorations may not be awarded to a general or flag officer of a friendly foreign nation without the approval of the SECDEF.

3. Unit Awards. The Presidential Unit Citation, the Navy Unit Commendation and the Meritorious Unit Commendation may be awarded to units of the armed forces of friendly foreign nations serving with the Armed Forces of the United States for outstanding performance in accordance with the same criteria applicable for such awards to units of the Armed Forces of the United States (see Chapter 3).

4. Service Medals. Except for the Antarctica Service Medal, it is DON policy not to award service medals to foreigners. This policy has been in effect since World War I, when the United States and her allies agreed not to exchange campaign or service medals.